

FOR INFORMATION AND ACTION
DA-2008-28
June 27, 2008

SUBJECT: Confirmation of Asian Citrus Psyllid in Tijuana, Mexico

TO: STATE AND TERRITORY AGRICULTURAL REGULATORY OFFICIALS

On June 23, 2008, USDA confirmed Asian citrus psyllid (ACP) in the city of Tijuana, Mexico. The initial ACP specimens were collected among sweet orange plants on a residential property approximately 2 miles from Mexico's border with California. To date, ACP has been detected on sweet orange or lemon plants on six residential properties in the area.

The initial ACP specimen was collected on June 19, 2008, by APHIS International Services personnel surveying in Mexico. APHIS personnel are conducting surveys in Mexico for ACP and citrus greening as part of Operation Psyllid Watch. The objective is to work cooperatively with Mexico to determine the extent of ACP infestation in the citrus-growing areas of Northern Mexico adjacent to or near the United States border, with intensified surveys in the Mexican States of Tamaulipas, Nuevo Leon, Sonora, Sinaloa, Chihuahua, Baja California Norte, and Baja California Sur.

The detection of ACP in the city of Tijuana, Mexico, is the closest to the U.S. California border to date. Previously, ACP was known to be present in other citrus-production areas of Mexico.

ACP is the primary vector for citrus greening. Neither ACP nor citrus greening is known to be in California, which is a major citrus-producing State. While citrus greening is not known to occur anywhere in Mexico, survey data indicates a broadly dispersed ACP population in that country, increasing the risk that citrus greening could spread quickly there if introduced or present.

APHIS personnel in Mexico informed their counterparts with the Secretaria de Agricultura, Ganaderia, Desarrollo Rural, Pesca y Alimentacion's (SAGARPA) Direccion General de Sanidad Vegetal (DGSV) regarding the suspect detection. DGSV agreed to conduct confirmatory identification of the specimens and allow specimens to be shipped to the United States. Confirmatory identification was obtained by the Agricultural Research Service's Systematic Entomology Laboratory in Beltsville, Maryland. DGSV also agreed to allow APHIS to conduct concurrent diagnostic testing of ACP specimens for citrus greening. On June 26, 2008, SAGARPA confirmed the detection of ACP in the city of Tijuana, Mexico. To date, all ACP specimens sent to APHIS have tested negative for citrus greening. Results from DGSV are not yet available.

APHIS continues to work closely with DGSV to intensify ACP and citrus greening survey activities in Tijuana and surrounding areas and to delimit the presence of ACP while assessing

PAGE TWO

what other measures need to be taken. DGSV has indicated that it does not plan to respond with an ACP treatment program at this time.

APHIS is working closely with the States of Arizona and California to develop an appropriate response to this situation. APHIS has also alerted the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to enhance its vigilance in inspecting for ACP-infested host plants and commodities.

For additional information about this detection, you may contact Patrick Gomes, National Coordinator, Citrus Health Response Program, at Area Code (919) 855-7313.

/s/ John H. Payne /for

Rebecca A. Bech
Deputy Administrator
Plant Protection and Quarantine